

578  
FIRST REPORT

OF THE

UPPER CANADA

CENTRAL SCHOOL.

---

1822.



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019 with funding from  
University of Toronto

FIRST  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
UPPER CANADA  
*CENTRAL SCHOOL,*  
&c. &c.



FIRST  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
UPPER CANADA  
CENTRAL SCHOOL,  
ON THE  
BRITISH NATIONAL SYSTEM  
OF  
EDUCATION.



PRINTED BY C. FOTHERGILL,  
YORK, UPPER CANADA.

.....

1822,



## PATRON.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,

*MAJOR GENERAL,*

SIR PEREGRINE MAITLAND, K. C. B.

&c. &c. &c.

## TRUSTEES.

The Honorable Lt. Colonel JOSEPH WELLS.

JOHN BEVERLY ROBINSON, Esq. *Attorney General.*

THOMAS RIDOUT, Esq. *Surveyor General.*

Mr. JOSEPH SPRAGG  *Master & Secretary.*



REPORT  
OF THE  
CENTRAL SCHOOL,

1821.

THE CENTRAL SCHOOL at YORK, UPPER CANADA, was opened in the Autumn of 1820, with a very small number of Scholars. In the course of three months the number increased to 63, affording an opportunity of instruction according to the *System* of the Schools of the BRITISH NATIONAL SOCIETY.

During the first year, 158 Children, 95 Boys and 63 Girls, have been instructed in the School : 91 of whom had never before received any Education ; and the others but very little.

With the opportunity that has been afforded from the present population, it is hoped much good has already been done : and the great improvement of those Scholars in particular, whose attendance has been regular, is most manifest. The number of Children that have received instruction since the commencement, strengthens the confidence entertained of the general benefit that will hereafter be felt from this INSTITUTION.

The SCHOOL is under the particular Patronage of His Excellency the LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, who has repeatedly visited it with the LADY SARAH MAITLAND, and their sa-

tisfaction at the progress of the Children has been often warmly expressed.

Notwithstanding the progress that has been made, and the great advantages with which this System of Education has been pursued, in Great Britain and various other quarters of the Globe, by which the solid improvement of a large portion of the rising generation is constantly effected, yet, the warm co-operation of those, who have the general good at heart, will be always most requisite, to promote the great design: therefore the cordial assistance of such, is earnestly called for; and it is hoped this will not be withheld.

To train up not only those who are destined for the higher departments of life, but also the rising generation in general, to proper and regular habits of application and industry, combined with sound moral and religious notions, must surely be most desirable, as being highly calculated both for the individual and general good.

If, as has been said, knowledge is power, it necessarily becomes a duty, in an age when the thirst for improvement is continually increasing among all ranks, to implant, with useful knowledge, good principles and notions in the rising generation: such as will not only fit them for the present life, but, (what is of infinitely greater importance) will prepare them for that which is to come; thereby providing the best defence against the insidious arts of the ill disposed.

“ In uncultivated lands noxious weeds spring up.”

“ If the generous seeds of religion and virtue be not carefully sown in the tender minds of Children, and if those seeds be not cultivated by good Education, there will certainly spring up briars and thorns, of which Parents will not only feel the inconvenience, but every body else that comes near them.”—*Tillotson*.

Tuition by the Scholars themselves, who are rendered

capable thereof, under the constant superintendence of the Master, has proved to be the most effectual and expeditious method of communicating sound Education ; by which those who teach and those who are taught are equally improved and benefitted. England, and the other polished nations of the Globe, being convinced by experience, of this truth, Schools, upon this System, on an extensive scale, have been universally established : and it is computed, that, in England full 250,000 Children are now receiving Education under this System. Of these ‘not less than 60,000 are annually sent forth to mix in the mass of society, carrying into it that valuable improvement in religious and moral knowledge, in decent and orderly habits, and in attachment to the institutions of their Country, which all so happily imbibe who are taught in the Schools formed on this system.’

It must be obvious to the enlightened mind, that, in forming a School on this System, however excellent the System may be, much is necessary to be done, particularly in its commencement; to qualify Teachers and Assistants for the different Classes, and thoroughly to establish the rules and method of instruction : and, where the superior advantages of the System are not generally known, the earnest exertions of friends to the INSTITUTION are most essential, in order to extend its benefits by their recommendations in its favor, and thus to remove any mistaken prejudices that may be created by its novelty : more especially where the population is small, and where a change of many of the inhabitants is continually occurring ; for it is of essential consequence, under the frequent change of Scholars, that takes place, to have always a good succession of those who have, by practice, become well qualified to be teachers.

Copying from the very successful exertions of the CENTRAL SCHOOL of the NATIONAL SOCIETY in LONDON, a suitable opportunity is now afforded here, by the immediate experience of the present Master, to prepare other Masters to spread

this *invaluable System of Education* throughout the whole of this Province.

The School is at all times open to the inspection of visitors ; who, on duly estimating the improved method of instruction by the multiplication of power and division of labor, and in particular the principles of this System of Education, will, it is to be hoped, always take an increasing interest in the same, at every repetition of their visit.

On establishing a new Institution for Education, although on a System that has, after full experience, received the high sanction and support of the greatest characters in Europe, it appears highly proper to give the following account of some of the proceedings of the BRITISH NATIONAL SOCIETY for promoting Education on this System, (patronized by His MAJESTY and supported by the principal Nobility and Gentry in Great Britain :) and to add a few Extracts from the Work of its revered Inventor the Rev. Dr. BELL.

J. SPRAGGS *Secretary.*

*EXTRACTS from the First Annual Report, 1812, of the  
General Committee of the NATIONAL SOCIETY.*

P. 25. “ The Committee beg leave previously to observe, that the adoption of the Madras System by the Society, has proceeded from the experience, not only of the facility by which this System communicates instruction, but of the influence which hitherto it is found to have on the morals of the Children.”

P. 18. “ The facility of communicating instruction by the System now intended to be brought into general use, its efficiency in fixing the attention, and inculcating the things taught ; the eagerness, and even delight, with which the Children embrace it, the entire possession which it takes of their minds, so as to render them pliant and obedient to discipline, (all of which is visible to any one who visits the Schools instituted on this plan,) and the anxiety which their Parents shew to have them instructed, are powerful instruments, both for infusing into their minds good knowledge, and forming them to good habits.”

P. 56. “ In all the Reports of the Schools established through the assistance of the Society, the Committee have the pleasure of observing that the happiness of the Children, under this plan of Education, forms a prominent subject of remark.”

“ To those who have observed the interest which is created, where the spirit of emulation is constantly in action, and who know the result of the full employment of the mind, this can occasion no surprize. It is in truth the natural consequence of the new System ; but the Committee would be inexcusable, if they did not bring forward this circumstance to the notice of the public, because they are persuaded, that it must be most gratifying to all the supporters of the institution, to learn, that in this method of instruction, *pleasure and improvement* accompany each other, and that by the same act of benevolence, they are forming the minds and promoting the cheerfulness of the Children under their protection.”

*From the Eighth Annual Report of the General Committee  
of the National Society, dated 1819.*

P. 9. "In entering on their eighth Annual Report, the Committee of the National Society have great satisfaction in stating, that on a general view of the proceedings of the last year, they find themselves confirmed in the anticipations they have formerly expressed, of the continually increasing diffusion of the National System of Education, and of the beneficial effects which are resulting throughout the kingdom, from this powerful engine of religious and moral improvement."

P. 10. "For the purpose of exhibiting the details of the System, the *Central School* has been open at all times to the inspection of Visitors; and the interest, which prevails amongst the public respecting it, is sufficiently evinced by the number of respectable persons whose names appear inscribed in the Visitor's Book, amounting during the last year to between 4 and 5,000: amongst those are found several Foreigners of high distinction, as the Grand Duke MICHAEL, the PRUSSIAN and AMERICAN AMBASSADORS, &c."

P. 11. "It has been very strongly felt by the School Committee, of what vital importance it is to the proper maintenance of the National System through the Kingdom, that all persons sent to be trained in the knowledge of the System, to become Masters, should thoroughly acquire it. Particular attention, has in consequence, been paid to this department, and every facility and advantage afforded to those who so attend the School."

P. 21. "In conclusion, the General Committee feel that they may sincerely congratulate the meeting on the progressive prosperity which has marked, and is marking the great cause they have undertaken."

*Extracts from the Rev. Dr. Bell's Instructions, &c. on the  
New System of Education.*

P. 4. "The Madras, or New System of Education has no

parallel in the history of mind. It differs not only *essentially* from every System which has not been copied from it, in the principle on which it is built, but also *materially*, in the laws by which it is conducted, in the practices with which it is accompanied, in the effects which it has produced, and in the rapid spread which it has made over the world. It bears no resemblance to those idle and unprofitable speculations, which engendered in the imagination of the writer, have no foundation in the nature and genius of Children, or in any well grounded knowledge or experience in the science, or even the art of tuition. It is, on the contrary, founded on a DISCOVERY, made within the walls of a School, for the multiplication of power, and division of labor, in the moral and intellectual world. It is the developement of AN ORGAN OF THE HUMAN MIND, adapted for the diffusion and advancement of Letters, Arts, and Sciences in general, as well as of scholastic instruction and discipline in particular. Nor has it failed of its object. Partially and imperfectly as it is yet administered, already a hundred times ten thousand voices speak the happiness which it has created, and exhibit the fruits which it has produced. The most numerous and extensive family ever ranged under one standard, or the founder of any School or Institution, ancient or modern, is rising up in every quarter of the habitable Globe, to profit by this discovery, and proclaim aloud what it has done for them."

"The present Essay on this subject comprises a *digest* of *Laws, rules, and practices, or helps*, tried and approved by repeated experience, for the application of this mental power to the *Elements of Tuition* in Reading and Writing, Religion, Morality, and Arithmetic. It is hoped, therefore, that Schoolmasters, Tutors, Parents, and all concerned in the education of youth, will be induced not only to read, but to study, and carry into execution, a System calculated to render the communication and acquisition of knowledge, to

those under their charge, easy, pleasant, economical, expeditious, and profitable.”

P. 13. “ To render simple, easy, pleasant, expeditious, and economical, the acquisition of the rudiments of letters, of morality, and religion, are the leading objects of Elementary Education. It has accordingly been the study of the Author of this Essay, to combine, in harmonious union, the progress and amusement of the Scholar, the ease and satisfaction of the Master, and the interest and gratification of the Parent. Such is the proximate object of the Madras System. Its ultimate object, the ultimate object or end of all education, is to make ‘ *good subjects, good men, good Christians* ;’ in other words, to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of its pupils.

To attain these ends, to attain any good end in education, the grand desideratum is to fix attention, to call forth exertion, to prevent the waste of time in School. This in the Madras School, is achieved, not by vulgar and coarse instruments, which reach no further than the body and produce only a degrading and momentary effect ; but by the strong and permanent hold, which its machinery takes of the mind, and the deep impression, which it makes on the heart.”

“ This System rests on the simple principle of *tuition by the Scholars themselves*. It is its distinguishing characteristic, that the School, how numerous soever, is taught solely by the pupils of the Institution, under a single Master, to whom, by multiplying his ministers at pleasure, it gives indefinite powers.”

P. 41. “ As emulation is especially serviceable in fostering the studies of those who have made some proficiency in learning ; so beginners and novices find greater benefit, as well as satisfaction from imitating their school fellows, than their Master, because the one is far easier than the other.”  
*Quintilian.*

“ The *Madras* (like every well regulated) *School* is arranged into forms or classes ; each composed of Scholars, who have made a similar proficiency. The Scholar ever finds his own level, not only in his class, but also in the ranks of the School, being promoted or degraded from place to place, or class to class, according to his relative proficiency.

By this classification, which, though neither new, nor peculiar to the *Madras School*, is yet carried to a greater length there than in any other School I have seen, a Teacher or Master has no more trouble, nay, has less trouble, in the tuition of a whole class, than of a single Scholar ; and that emulation, or desire of excellence, which the Creator has implanted in the human breast for the wisest and noblest purposes, is thus called forth, and proves a powerful and unceasing incentive to laudable exertion,—a mild, yet effectual instrument of discipline.”

P. 43. “ By the perpetual attendance of the Teachers on their Classes, and their unceasing vigilance ; by the love of imitation natural to Children, by the incessant stimulus of emulation, and by the continual occupation of every member of every class, the most effectual provision is made for the gentlest discipline, as well as for the perfect instruction, and rapid improvement of the whole School.”

P. 63. “As no School can do more than teach itself by its own Scholars ; so neither can the agency of the Teachers, nor the emulation of the Scholars, be carried farther than is done by continued and uninterrupted lessons ; and the subdivision in spelling cannot go beyond single letters, nor the multiplication in saying the lesson beyond the simultaneous repetition of it by the whole class ; and above all, the writing of every initiatory lesson, before and after it is learned, is accompanied with the utmost dispatch, distinctness, and gratification.”

This perpetual occupation, along with perfect instruc-

tion, conduces also *greatly to good order and silence*. Not a moment can be otherwise than usefully, pleasantly, and profitably employed. How important this is to habits of attention and diligence, and to the progress of the Scholar, will be felt and acknowledged by all those who recollect how much of their time was wasted at School."

P. 22. "It will naturally be enquired, whether this education has produced any consequences in the lives of those Children? The answer to this question is given by themselves *on their coming to the years of discretion*; and is published in a postscript to the last reprint of the *Report of the Madras School*. That postscript consists of documents and vouchers, illustrative of the fruits of the new System of Education, in the character, conduct, and fortunes of its pupils. The substance of these documents, and the arguments founded on them, are summed up by the Rev. F. Iremonger in his "SUGGESTIONS TO THE PROMOTERS OF DR. BELL'S SYSTEM OF EDUCATION, 1813.,"—a work abounding with useful and solid information. "The Author (says he) cannot conclude this introductory chapter, without congratulating the original inventor of the system, (Dr. Bell) on the realization of his anxious hopes, on the reward of those labours which will, under Divine Providence, prove a lasting blessing to posterity, and call forth the gratitude of thousands in this country, [Great Britain] stimulated by the same feelings of affection; which after eleven years silence, produced from his Indian Pupils a letter, fully proving, (as Dr. Bell says,) 'that the sentiments, which it was his incessant aim to inspire, had not evaporated; and that the principles, which his dutiful pupils had imbibed, had taken deep root, and continued to yield their natural fruits.' "This pleasing instance of gratitude, as well as satisfactory practical proof of the strong hold, which the new System takes on the mind, is signed by nearly fifty of his pupils at Madras, (in the name of the whole body) and, while it shews a becoming gratitude, on their part, for the unwearied assiduity, shewn by

their benevolent Pastor, it enumerates the respectable situations in life, in which they are placed, ascribing to his paternal care, under the great disposer of events, their preservation, their comfort, and all the valuable advantages they enjoyed. They have since presented Dr. Bell with a service of sacramental plate, a gold chain, and a medal, and have begged that 100 copies of his miniature, on copper plate engravings, may be sent to be distributed amongst them. When the total ignorance of those Children, at the time of their first being instructed by Dr. Bell, is considered; the lamentable want of early good impressions, and their exposure to vice, and particularly deceit of every kind; and when we compare their subsequent moral and religious improvement, and the respectable places in society, which they afterwards filled; when too there was more to undo, before sound principles could be imbibed, than can be the case in this happier country, an undeniable proof is afforded of the excellence of Dr. Bell's mode of instruction; nor can there be the smallest reason for doubting, that whenever the same measures are steadily and perfectly adopted, they will be attended uniformly with the same lasting good effects."

*Extract of a Letter from James Allan Park, Esquire. King's Counsel, (now the Honorable Mr. Justice Park,) to G. W. Marriot, Esquire dated 29th December, 1812.*

P. 34. "Your account of Dr. Bell's success, and of the advancement of his good scheme, is highly interesting to me. I really think, that his plan, if rightly conducted, is one of the most stupendous engines that ever has been wielded, since the days of our Saviour and his Apostles, for the advancement of God's true religion upon earth. It never has been my opinion, that Dr. Bell is infected with vanity; but there never was a man, who, from seeing his plans taking a wide and deep root in the earth, has had more just cause to be vain than our excellent friend.

I am not sure that this is not the commencement, by his means, of that glorious æra, when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the seas."

P. 26. "As the facts, relative to the complete success of the new system of Education, in the original experiment, made at Madras, are established by the highest authorities abroad: so the history of its transplantation into England, and of its subsequent propagation and results, rests on the highest authorities at home. But it is not for the sake of a barren and unprofitable truth, that these documents and vouchers, with which is intimately and inseparably blended so much that is personal, so much that needeth apology, are now produced. It is in the hope that a brief summary of facts, proofs, and illustrations, compiled from original sources, from official reports, and from the most respectable authorities, may awaken those, who are not yet fully alive to the real spirit and tendency of the new System of Education, and to the consequences and results of a discovery, which, there is no hesitation in saying, are as grand and interesting, as the means employed for their attainment are simple and lowly. It is especially in the hope, that the precedents, which are here set before them from the highest authorities in the Church and State, may stimulate them to go and do likewise."







**FIRST REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**UPPER CANADA**  
**CENTRAL SCHOOL.**

---

1822.